



Mercury Management in School Health Offices

A Series of Best Management Practices

Most devices in school health offices that contain mercury can be replaced with alternative products that are safer to work with, and pose no danger to human health.

Mercury containing devices and their safe substitutions

Fever thermometers and blood pressure monitors are two common devices that may contain mercury. Alternatives such as alcohol or digital thermometers can be as accurate as those containing mercury. Substituting aneroid sphygmomanometers for mercury ones will eliminate the unnecessary risk of spills and exposure. Some other sources of mercury include: nasal spray and contact lens solution containing thimerosal (an ingredient containing mercury), fluorescent lighting and thermostats.

New Hampshire law regarding the use of mercury devices in schools

Public and private schools in New Hampshire may not use elemental mercury, mercury compounds, or mercury-added instructional equipment and materials in primary or secondary classrooms. Only measuring devices containing mercury for which there is no adequate substitute may be used in school laboratories.

Steps your school can take to eliminate mercury use

- Get commitment from administrators
- Start a program and appoint a leader
- Adopt a “mercury-free” policy
- Conduct an inventory
- Communicate the results to students and staff

How to properly dispose of any mercury-containing devices

Because it is necessary to adhere to hazardous waste and/or universal waste regulations to dispose of mercury properly, it is best to ask for help in removing the mercury containing devices. NHPPP can help you with recycling, vendors and other options for removing mercury from schools. Contact us for more information.

Mercury Spill Cleanup Procedures

In the event of a mercury spill, please contact DES Special Investigations Section (603) 271-3899.

VENTILATE and **EVACUATE** the area where the spill occurred

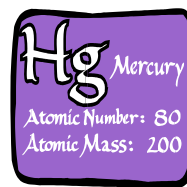
DO NOT vacuum up spilled mercury.

DO NOT pour mercury down the drain, or in the trash.

Use latex or rubber gloves when cleaning up the spill.

Use cardboard, a squeegee or an eyedropper to collect all glass and mercury.

Place all contaminated material in a doubled plastic bag for proper disposal.



New Hampshire Pollution Prevention in Schools Project

<http://www.des.nh.gov/nhPPP/Schools/> or call (603) 271-0878

This document was paid for in part by a Pollution Prevention grant from
U.S. EPA-New England to assist the school sector.